

Message Text

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42

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

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P 231510Z MAR 74

FM AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 771

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

UNCLAS MEDELLIN 0093

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT

SUBJECT: LOPEZ KEYNOTES LARGE LIBERAL RALLY IN MEDELLIN

REF: MEDELLIN 0078

1. CANDIDATE ALFONSO LOPEZ AND THE LIBERAL PARTY ON MARCH 22 STAGED WHAT WAS BY FAR MEDELLIN S LARGEST POLITICAL MANIFESTACION OF THE YEAR IN THE CITY'S PARQUE BERRIO. AN ENTHUSIASTIC CROWD OF SOMEWHERE NEAR 50-55,000 (AT ITS HEIGHT) ALMOST FILLED THE PARK, ALTHOUGH BY THE TIME LOPEZ BEGIN SPEAKING AN APPRECIABLE NUMBER HAD ALREADY LEFT. THE RALLY APPEARED ABOUT DOUBLE THE SIZE OF THE ANAPO RALLY MARCH 8 IN THE SAME PLAZA.

2. DESPITE THE LARGE TURNOUT, THE RALLY WAS SOMEWHAT MARRED BY AN UNDERTONE OF TENSION AND CONFLICT RESULTING FROM THE AWKWARD SPLIT AMONG LIBERALS HERE AT THE DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL. FOR EXAMPLE PART OF THE SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE ANTIOQUIAN LIBERAL DIRECTORATE, FABIO ECHEVERRI CORREA, WAS DROWNED OUT BY THE LOUD MUSIC OF A BAND REPUTEDLY HIRED BY THE DISSIDENT ANTIOQUIA LIBERAL EN MARCHA. IN TURN, JORGE VALENCIA JARAMILLO OF THE LATTER GROUP HAD HIS SPEECH OUT SHORT BY HECKLING FROM THE PREDOMINANTLY PRO-DIRECTORATE CROWD.

3. LOPEZ DREW HIS LOUDEST CHEERS WHEN DENOUNCING SARCASTICALLY
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THE INFLUENTIAL MEDELLIN CONSERVATIVE DAILY NEWSPAPER EL COLOM-

BIANO AND WHEN HE CALLED FOR RECOVERING " FROM FOREIGN HANDS "
CONTROL OF COLOMBIA'S MINERAL RESOURCES, MENTIONING SPECIFICALLY
GOLD, NICKEL AND COAL.

4. THE RALLY WAS ENTIRELY PEACEFUL AND TOOK PLACE WITHOUT
INCIDENT. THE CONSERVATIVES WILL ATTEMPT TO MATCH THE
LIBERAL TURNOUT IN THEIR RALLY AND IT NOW FIRMLY SCHEDULED
FOR APRIL 5 IN THE SAME PARK.
COOPER

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